

October 8, 2002

Marlene H. Dortch
Commission Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW, CY-B402,
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Commissioners:

Samceda, representing over 200 businesses, has nearly half a century of effective business leadership in the public policy arena. Organized to involve member businesses, individuals and civic leaders in a collaborative effort with local, regional, state and federal officials, it addresses the challenges affecting the economic health, well-being and quality of life issues on the Peninsula.

I understand that you are in the process of reviewing SBC Pacific Bell's long distance application. As you know, California is facing some incredibly challenging economic times, so it is essential that we encourage competition in the telecommunications industry. Regulators must take the necessary steps to create more jobs and to provide additional opportunities for the State's businesses. It is up to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to insure that California's long distance market is open and competitive.

SBC Pacific Bell filed its long distance application over four years ago. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) held an unprecedented series of filings, workshops, audits, re-filings, tests and hearings - all were designed to insure that SBC Pacific Bell had complied with the 1996 Telecommunications Act, which requires that competitors have access to an open market. Consumers across the State have access to a wide array of services offered by a number of different companies, including those providing local phone service.

By allowing SBC Pacific Bell to enter the long distance market, pressure will be applied to competitors which will in turn drive prices downward - this is exactly what happened in other states that have opened their long distance markets. Consumers and businesses alike will reap the savings and enjoy simpler calling plans.

Samceda has had a long-term relationship with SBC Pacific Bell - the company has been a great corporate citizen, and makes many positive contributions to this state and to our local economy. We are disappointed that the long distance entry process for SBC Pacific Bell has taken so long especially when other states have benefited from competition in the long distance market.

I urge you to approve SBC Pacific Bell's long distance application and let Californians reap the benefits that consumers in 23 states are already enjoying.

Sincerely,

Deberah Bringelson
President
SAMCEDA